

Yuma Elementary School District 1

450 W. 6th Street,

Yuma Az. 85364

To: The Federal Communications Commission

From: Yuma Elementary School District 1

Re: CC Docket No. 02-06

Date: **September 9, 2008**

The Yuma Elementary School District 1 hereby lends its strong support to the proposed addition of “telephone broadcast messaging” to the list of services eligible for support under the schools and libraries (“E-rate”) program.

It is established that improving communications between and among educators, students, and parents has played a vital role in improving educational performance in elementary and secondary schools. Telephone broadcast messaging has offered significant advantages and benefits over the less efficient means which schools traditionally used to reach out to students and parents, such as hand-delivered written notices and phone tree messages.

For example, our telephone broadcast messaging has been typically used as a means of contacting parents regarding absent or truant students, thereby facilitating increased classroom attendance. Telephone broadcast messaging has also been used to notify and inform parents of testing schedules, parent/teacher conferences, and to otherwise increase participation by parents in their children’s education.

A further and significant benefit of telephone broadcast messaging is that it has provided an important emergency response resource in the event of weather-related events, health or other civil emergencies, or other incidents that require schools to lock down or transfer students to safe locations. Less than 2 weeks ago we used our telephone broadcast messaging system to inform parents of a major power outage. This outage was the result of a wind and rain storm. The storm was so severe that power to the phone system was also affected. Once notification was made to the parents, all but 9 students were picked up within an hour and within 3 hours, all students were picked up.

In enacting the E-rate program in 1996, Congress recognized that many schools and libraries have limited resources that constrain their access to emerging technologies that can enhance and support their educational mission. **The cost of our system is one new teacher per year.** Telephone broadcast messaging, which allows schools to more efficiently and effectively communicate with students and parents, is a prime example of such an emerging technology and should be included within the E-rate program's list of eligible services.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Lundy, Coordinator; Emergency Crisis Response Management

Yuma Elementary School District 1